

Southern & Gatwick Express Complaints Handling

Your questions answered



SOUTHERN

GATWICK EXPRESS

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Introduction

This is our policy on handling complaints. It tells you:

- How to contact us when you wish to make a complaint
- How your complaint will be treated
- How long we will take to respond to your complaint
- When we will consider paying you compensation
- If you feel we have not treated your complaint fairly, what action you can take
- When we will not respond to your complaint

What is a complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction by a passenger, or potential passenger, about service delivery or about company or industry policy.

How do I make a complaint?

You and your feedback are very important to us. Your feedback will be reviewed and will help us to make changes to our business. When you wish to make a complaint, we know it is very important that you feel you can do so easily and be responded to politely, with a promise of redress or action when this is appropriate. Where we have got it wrong, we will accept responsibility and say that we are sorry.

There are various ways you can complain to us.

In person

You can talk to a member of staff. You can also talk to the local Station Manager or Area Manager. You may have to make an appointment to do this as they are in charge of more than one station. We also hold regular meet the manager events, details of which are available at southernrailway.com/meetthemanager

In writing

You can make your complaint in writing in several ways.

- You can fill out a 'Customer Comment' form, available at every staffed station on request, and either hand it in to the station, or send it directly to our Customer Services Department
- You can write us a letter
- You can send us an email or a fax
- You can complete the feedback form on our website

By telephone

You can speak to a member of the Customer Services team 24 hours a day, every day except Christmas Day.

By text-phone

You can contact our text-phone number 24 hours a day, every day except Christmas Day.

Where can I find your contact details?

We will tell you how to contact us;

- In all our major publications, such as our timetables and our Passengers' Charter
- On our website
- On posters displayed at every station
- On posters displayed in every carriage of our trains
- In local telephone directories
- On request from a member of staff

Our address is

Southern / Gatwick Express Customer Services
PO Box 10240
Ashby-de-la-Zouch LE65 9EB

Our telephone numbers are

Telephone: 03451 27 29 20 (Southern) 0345 850 1530 (Gatwick Express)

Facsimile: 03451 27 29 30

Text-phone: 0800 138 1018

Our website addresses are:

southernrailway.com

gatwickexpress.com

Our email addresses are:

comments@southernrailway.com

customerservices@gatwickexpress.com

What will happen to my complaint?

If you telephone us

When you telephone us you will get through to our answering service almost immediately. You may then choose from the options on offer, or wait to speak to a member of the Customer Services Team. We aim to answer most calls within 30 seconds.

If you tell a member of staff

Our staff will do all they can to resolve the problem straight away. If this is not possible, they will provide you with details of how to contact Customer Services. Our Customer Services team members will investigate your complaint, and make sure you get the right response.

If you write to us, fax us or fill in a form on our website

Every complaint received at Customer Services (including those made at stations) is logged onto a database and for every complaint you will be issued with a reference number.

If you have special needs

If you require a response in a different format, or in a foreign language, we will do our best to provide it. Where we do not have the knowledge to provide this service, we will employ translators or seek the advice of disability groups.

How quickly will you reply?

We aim to reply in full to emails within 5 working days and to letters/comments forms within 10 working days of receipt. Depending upon the complexity of complaint, this may not be possible. If we are unable to meet these timescales, we will acknowledge your complaint instead and keep you updated on progress until the case is resolved, which should take no longer than 20 working days.

How do I know my complaint will be treated fairly?

We will thoroughly investigate all the complaints we receive. This will make sure that our response is fair, and without bias. A full explanation and an apology (where appropriate) will be in our reply. We will answer every issue raised in a complaint in this way.

What happens to complaints about staff?

We expect our staff to be professional and courteous to customers and passengers at all times, therefore we take complaints about poor staff conduct extremely seriously. We commit to passing any customer complaints or concerns regarding our staff on to the appropriate manager(s) for investigation and appropriate follow up action. We will be open and transparent about the position of the person responsible for carrying out the interview or investigation and the likely timescales for this, however please be aware that we may not be able to inform you of the outcome if this falls under our employee/employer confidentiality agreement.

What if my complaint is about someone else?

All the train companies follow the same principles when dealing with complaints referring to more than one company. If your complaint refers to another transport provider, we will explain this in our reply and forward your complaint to them.

Will you give my details to other people?

Your personal information will not be given to any other organisation, with the exception of those below and only then if it is appropriate and necessary to do so:

- Other Train Operating Companies
- Passenger Focus and London TravelWatch
- Other Transport Providers when you ask us to
- Any other public body carrying out its statutory functions

Will I get compensation?

Compensation is given in line with the National Rail Conditions of Carriage and as set out in our Passengers' Charter. Sometimes we will also offer compensation, or a goodwill gesture where we think it is appropriate to do so. This is usually given as National Rail Travel Vouchers, or where appropriate a cheque will be sent.

Where one of our trains is delayed by 30 minutes or more you are entitled to compensation under our Delay Repay scheme. Details of this can be found on our website or in leaflets at each of our staffed stations.

If I am still not satisfied, what else can I do?

If you are not happy with the way we have answered your complaint, please contact us again and let us know why you were dissatisfied. We'll review the matter again and re-consider our position, with the review carried out by a more senior member of staff than originally replied, and contact you again.

When we write to you following such a review we will, unless we are confident that we have fully addressed your concerns, also include contact details for either Passenger Focus or London TravelWatch. If you are still unhappy, you may wish to appeal to them with the details of your complaint, and if appropriate, they will contact us on your behalf.

You can contact London TravelWatch about any issue that is wholly to do with:

- journeys within Greater London
- journeys between London and Oxted, Redhill, Gatwick Airport, Dorking and London Road (Guildford) and any intermediate station
- journeys between Clapham Junction and Tring and any intermediate station

London TravelWatch

Dexter House
2 Royal Mint Court
London
EC3N 4QN

Tel: 020 3176 2999 (calls may be recorded)

Fax: 020 7505 9003

enquiries@londontravelwatch.org.uk
londontravelwatch.org.uk

You can contact Passenger Focus about any issue, except those that are wholly to do with:

- journeys within Greater London
- journeys between London and Oxted, Redhill, Gatwick Airport, Dorking and London Road (Guildford) and any intermediate station
- journeys between Clapham Junction and Tring and any intermediate station

RTEH-XAGE-BYKZ
Passenger Focus
PO Box 5594
Southend on Sea
SS1 9PZ

Tel: 0300 123 2350 (calls may be recorded)

Fax: 0345 850 1392

advice@passengerfocus.org.uk
passengerfocus.org.uk

When won't you respond to my complaint?

By telephone

Our Customer Services staff are trained to remain polite at all times. If you use abusive language or an aggressive tone, they may terminate the call.

In person

If you use abusive language or behaviour to a member of our staff, they may walk away, or seek assistance from another staff member. In extreme circumstances, the police may be called. It is unlikely in these circumstances that your complaint will be taken seriously.

By letter, email, fax or our website

If a letter contains abusive language or is aggressive in tone, we will reply, but will advise you in our response that this is unacceptable. Furthermore we may terminate correspondence about a specific complaint where it is clear that despite our best efforts, we are unlikely to satisfy you. If you write to us again about a different issue, it will be treated as any other new complaint.

The decision to terminate correspondence will only be made by a senior manager after making sure that the matter has previously been referred to Passenger Focus or London Travel Watch.

We will always tell you when we are about to terminate a complaint, and the reason why we are taking this action.

How do I make a claim against you?

If you have had an accident on one of our trains or at one of our stations, or if you have identified something which you believe to be of an unsafe nature, please let us know as quickly as possible so that we can take appropriate action. We commit to passing all comments and complaints of this nature on to our Safety Department.

Personal Injury Claims

If you have had an accident or sustained an injury and you wish to claim compensation from us, you will need to put your claim in writing to:

Southern Safety Department
 Go-Ahead House
 26-28 Addiscombe Road
 Croydon
 CR9 5GA

Damaged Property Claims

If an item of your property has been damaged on one of our trains or at one of our stations and you believe we were to blame, please contact us providing full details including the date, time and if appropriate photographic evidence.

Do you publish information about complaints?

This procedure, and the commitments made in it, are regularly monitored and audited. We use all the information about complaints to help us make decisions about how we should make changes to our services and improvements to our stations and trains.

We produce internal reports every four weeks which help our Directors and other managers to better understand the opinion of our passengers. Separate reports, containing the same information, are given every four weeks to the Department for Transport (DfT) and Office of Rail Regulation (ORR).

These reports also confirm that we are maintaining the promises made in our Passengers' Charter.

All of our auditing and monitoring procedures are regularly reviewed. This procedure will be reviewed at least once a year or more frequently if changes are needed and we will continue to consult Passenger Focus and London TravelWatch in doing so.